

Call for Applications - Bielefeld Young Researchers Fund (BNF)

The next round of the Bielefeld Young Researchers Fund (Bielefelder Nachwuchsfonds, BNF) for the promotion of young scientists will take place in spring. **The deadline for applications is 1st April 2026.**

Funding line PhD Students:

Students preparing for a doctorate, doctoral candidates in the final phase of their doctorate and postdocs can apply for the following measures of the BNF:

a) Career Bridge Master - Doctorate

Particularly qualified Master's graduates who graduates at Bielefeld University or intend to obtain their doctorate here can apply for this scholarship to finance a transitional and preparatory phase for doctoral projects in the Funding Line for PhD-Students. The Career Bridge Master - Doctorate is offered for a duration of max. 6 months with a monthly stipend of €1.000.

b) Doctoral Completion Scholarships

These scholarships are provided with a duration of 6 months and a monthly stipend of €1,250; the stipend can be increased by the faculty by a maximum of €500.

Funding line Postdocs:

Young scientists who have completed their doctorate within the last five years or whose promotion procedure has already been officially opened can apply for one of the three funding measures:

c) Research Subsidies and Promotion of Mobility

This measure is intended to fund research subsidies and promotion of mobility for postdocs. The travel funds can be used for research trips (for example in order to visit archives) and for short research trips to an international guest institute. The maximum funding amount is €5,000 for a period of up to 12 months.

d) Entry into Third-Party Research

This measure is intended to facilitate the preparation of third-party funded applications by young academics. Postdocs can apply for financial support in order to facilitate the entry into third-party funded research. This could be to cover costs such as assistants, preliminary study materials or travel expenses for visiting cooperation partners or conferences. The maximum funding amount is EUR 15,000 for a period of up to 12 months.

e) Career Bridge Doctorate - Postdoc

In order to finance the costs of living during the 'transition period' after earning a doctorate, young academics without employment/scholarships can apply for a CAREER BRIDGE DOCTORATE-POSTDOC in the amount of 2,000 €/month for a period of up to 12 months. The scholarship amount can be increased by the faculty/working unit by a maximum amount of €500. Additional child benefits of €250/month/child are awarded by BNF where applicable. Aiming at supporting the application for third party funding of a corresponding existing position or group of junior scientists and in order to prepare an application for third-party funding, scholars can also apply for research aid and measures for the promotion of mobility alongside the scholarship.

For any further information on BNF, please visit our website uni-bielefeld.de/en/nachwuchsfonds. We provide comprehensive information concerning the application process and guidelines as well as criteria for funding.

Please note: Any application must use the application forms provided on our website.

Applicants in the funding lines for PhD-students must also provide an assessment by their supervisor which is to be sent to nachwuchsfonds@uni-bielefeld.de directly by the supervisor no later than **April 1st, 2026**. A form for the assessment is available on our website. The career bridges and doctoral completion scholarship can be increased in case of an applicant providing for children. Please fill in the Declaration of Parenthood from our website if you think you are eligible.

Applicants themselves are responsible for meeting the deadline and for submitting the applications by e-mail only to nachwuchsfonds@uni-bielefeld.de. All application forms must include a signature by the supervisor and a representative of the faculty/institution head confirming their support for the application. Therefore, applicants must send their complete applications via e-mail to their supervisors and faculties (administrative head/dean) before the deadline. The supervisors and faculties are then asked to sign the documents and return them to the applicants. If it not possible to add a digital signature to the document, supervisor and faculty can also forward the proposal via e-mail to nachwuchsfonds@uni-bielefeld.de by **April 1st, 2026** as a confirmation of their support for the application.

All forms and documents for applying are available for download on our website: www.uni-bielefeld.de/en/nachwuchsfonds

Should you have specific questions concerning the BNF, please use our **online-consultation** (in German and English by demand) for applicants:

Funding Line for PhD-Students:

FEBRUARY 24TH, 9-10 AM

<https://uni-bielefeld.zoom-x.de/j/67381122629?pwd=1ZN9ywFSacSgUcRHZUQZrvYP4TjGEG.1>

Meeting-ID: 673 8112 2629
Password: 414009

Funding Line for Postdocs:

FEBRUARY 24TH, 10-11 AM

<https://uni-bielefeld.zoom-x.de/j/64384057143?pwd=UK8s4sAN2ajFvGEJuxaRwSEeZ17lvf.1>

Meeting-ID: 643 8405 7143
Password: 291246

Should you have any further questions, please contact us via nachwuchsfonds@uni-bielefeld.de